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NEWS DIGEST

OF THE I.A.R.F.

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS - CHICAGO 1958

NEWS DIGEST OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOR LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

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EDITORIAL

At the time when this issue is published, we may expect that every visitor to our Chicago Congress will be home again. Most of the reports of the meetings will have been published and in the smaller circles most of the stories been told. We may expect the impressions on the whole to have been clarified and tested. In short, it is time to try to give an evaluation of the Congress. It is perhaps not fair to write an evaluation when one has been so involved in the preparations as the writer of this editorial. One sees too sharply the weak points and the improvisations, that others pass without noticing. On the other hand, an insider knows also too well where the weak points could be, and is able to establish where really unexpected successes are being scored and where dangerous rocks are being avoided, things which outsiders tend to miss.

Let me repeat here first in writing what has been said more than once in America itself: that the success of the Congress — and seen as a whole it was a great success — was due for a great part to the generous spirit and kind hospitality of the Americans. The way in which they helped many visitors to come, the tours before and after the meetings, the kindness with which they surrounded us during the congress itself, created an atmosphere that clearly improved the meetings themselves. There were drawbacks in being in a big mid-western city during the summer, but they were much less felt than we feared!

This congress again showed what we have experienced at other international meetings of our Association: that their success lies not so much in listening to excellent lectures as in being together as liberals from all over the world, with the possibility of every visitor making a contribution, especially in the discussion groups. The evening lectures were an important part of the programme, and I remember with gratitude some outstanding speakers who with their words set the tune of the congress; but I must confess that the way in which the panels, with their excellent teams of panel-members, functioned was the basis for the spiritual development of the congress. The resolutions which were passed at the last of the plenary sessions must not be read as the well-balanced results of day-long sessions of experts, but as signs which show the seriousness with which liberals of various countries and professions look at the problems of their age and as signs of the

extent of their interest in trying to make a useful contribution. I have read criticisms which said that these resolutions were not „revolutionary". This may be true, but our liberal contribution will never be revolutionary. Our task, as I see it, is more to try to create and preserve a spirit than to develop concrete programmes. This congress has been very useful, in as much as it showed clearly the spiritual situation of our movement. International Liberal Christianity comprises several trends. There is a difference between the European and the American approach, between the continental European and the Anglo-Saxon spirit, between the older liberal churches, founded in the time of the Reformation, and the modernist movements of the XIXth century, between the left-wing, humanist, tendencies and the right-wing, christocentric trends, between the pronounced Protestant bodies and the organizations in which the Catholic traditions are still alive. All of them were present at the congress, and one of the advantages of these meetings was that all could give their contribution without anyone forcing his standpoint upon the others or on the movement as a whole. We were aiming more at a communion of spirit than at the formulation of a common belief.

We must also bear this in mind if we are to evaluate the resolutions passed at the congress. As has been said above, they do not give a concrete programme, but show the spirit in which we want our movement as a whole to develop in the near future.

There is one point which we must stress. That is that the theme of the congress, which was chosen at a suggestion of our American hosts, must remain one of our objects in the years to come. Every year of international contacts in all the fields in which men work together in our small world shows more clearly how important in human life religion is and how many difficulties religious diversity creates for international understanding. We are in great need of a liberal approach to these difficulties. The Study Centre, which constituted one of our most important decisions at our business-meeting, should be organized as soon and as well as possible. We liberals as a movement are called upon to give our contribution.

And besides this: our movement itself is in need of this wide outlook on the great problems of our age. Our danger lies in remaining static and in confining ourselves to the traditional problems of religious liberalism. These problems are important, especially in some countries, but they tend to make our movement provincial. This congress has been a powerful stimulus to making our movement more aware of the problems of this century, and I hope that this stimulus will continue to inspire us.

H. FABER

REPORT OF THE CHICAGO CONGRESS

This report is not intended as an evaluation of the Chicago Congress 1958. Its aim is essentially to give a survey of the most important events of that congress and to relate through the written word to all who could not partake in it, something of the atmosphere, of the spirit, that prevailed in all meetings, discussions and private talks during these days. This spirit of fellowship we want to preserve as carefully as possible, now seas and mountains divide us again and everyone has returned to his home, his work and his congregation.

Arrival

It was 4.30 pm on August 8th when two Greyhound buses with 70 delegates and visitors mainly from Europe stopped before the Ida Noyes Hall of the University of Chicago, and Mrs. J. Brock Havron, the indefatigable secretary of the Congress Committee, and the Rev. Edward A. Cahill, brisk and healthy, came down the steps and welcomed the passengers. Months of hard work and intricate preparations on both sides of the Atlantic lay behind this moment. Now all became visible and real. Joy and expectations mingled with each other and were reflected in the greeting of Dr Dana McLean Greeley, chairman of the General Committee of this Congress.

The bus passengers, after 3-day tour from Montreal to Chicago, having already had some amazing and heartwarming experiences of Canadian and American hospitality, followed the ushers meekly but impressed to the brand-new women's dormitory of the Chicago University and explored that day and the next the campus, that was so splendidly suited for a congress such as this.

The congress begins

The official greetings to the more than 800 delegates and visitors from 20 different countries took place at the welcoming dinner on Saturday, Aug. 9th, where food was lavishly adorned with speeches. That same evening Prof. Dr Wilhelm Pauck of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, addressed the congress. His scholarly and thorough exposition stressed the need for a renewed historical study and a comparison of the historical forms of Christianity, so that the churches can undertake the task of understanding themselves in terms of historical change and of re-interpreting the Gospel, as our time demands. "We are in a process ot reorientation", he said, "Philosophy of religion no longer dominates the theological scene. The Humanists have

retired to the background . . . The Neo-Orthodox also do not exercise a great appeal. The theological world is waiting for the historians to come to the fore and to begin again where the theological discussion was left unresolved at the end of the first World War . . . "

On Sunday morning the Rev. Dr André Bouvier (Geneva) preached on Ef. 4,6, one of those texts of the New Testament which through the ages have made an appeal for an inclusive Christian faith. In the afternoon the European delegates were received in the homes of Chicago families and enjoyed it so much that many of them had difficulty in being back in time for the main evening address. Sir Muhammed Zafrulla Khan, Judge of the Intern. Court of Justice, The Hague, spoke about the contribution of Islam to the solution of the world's problems today. He made it very clear that Islam is based on the revelation of God to Mohammed, contained in the Holy Koran, in which God Himself speaks. Islam bases itself on a fundamental unity: unity of God, unity of the universe, unity of man and life. For the social, economic and scientific sphere the Holy Koran has set certain principles, giving guidance. Out of the shadow of cataclysm that threatens mankind today, only the turning of mankind to God can lead the way. He is a God of mercy and able to inspire all who strive for peace.

Panel-discussion groups at work

Meanwhile the discussion groups had met twice, covering such broad themes as: Philosophy and Theology; Growing Tensions, social, racial and religious; Science in the Modern World; Worship, Education and the Arts; Ethics and International Relations; Human Values and Economic Forces. One of the most satisfying experiences of the Congress was that, notwithstanding a far greater attendance than expected, these discussion groups did achieve some work. Here the programme committee must be praised for its wise choice of panel members, and the panel members for their efforts to give the best of themselves and to integrate what was suitable from the remarks of the "public".

On Monday afternoon the first plenary session took place, and already between the trees of discussion one could see ripening some fruits of the findings! Problems were raised and expressions used, which began to give colour and shape to the congress. For example the first group mentioned a discussion of the place of reason in religious experience and the problem whether one could really understand an other religion — or should one rather say that a religious tradition can only be fully understood by itself? The second discussion group coined the expression "divine discontent" as an important element of liberal religion, which will

always encourage man to change inhuman conditions rather then accept them. And panel six included a humoristic insight in its discussions, as it mentioned the importance of the material world for Buddhists too, quoting a Buddhist participant, who had said that an air-conditioned room was a help for him in his meditations. On the evening of that same Monday Dr. Kalidas Nag, lecturer at the University of Calcutta, gave a learned historical survey of the growth and changes of Hinduism and its contacts with the West. Establishment of an internationally supported university of comparative religion to foster a truer and a deeper understanding of East and West was one of his hopes.

Luncheons

As the congress lasted only five days, time was valuable and luncheons were used for meetings too. The International Union of Liberal Christian Women had lunch together and re-elected Rev. Dr. Cornelia Boer (Netherlands) as their President. Ministers had lunch together and heard brief (as far as ministers can be brief) addresses on: "Vital trends in liberal preaching around the world". At the allcongress luncheon on Tuesday August 12th a deep silence fell as the Rev. Stewart Carter as Vice-President of the IARF and as a friend paid a solemn, sober and impressive tribute to the late Dr. Frederick May Eliot, a man, as he said, with a dynamic and lovable personality and an acute mind, to whom many of us had looked for guidance in the future.

The tenth anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights was commemorated by Dr Philip M. Klutznick and the principal address at this same luncheon was delivered by Dr. Preston Bradley, of the People's Church, Chicago, urging all to accept the gift and the costs of liberalism in a world which so badly needed it.

The IARF, today and tomorrow

Still on that same Tuesday, in the afternoon, the president of the IARF convened the IARF business meeting, well attended despite the ever increasing Chicago sunshine (which we had begun to respect) and the spiritual activities of the last days. The report of the Secretariat mentioned the successful help to the Hungarian people, the trips of the Secretaries to strengthen the ties beween the member groups, while the office in Holland is a centre of growing importance, a clearing-house from which service to an increasing number of individuals and churches is rendered. The limited funds at its disposal, however, restricted the activities and a call upon friends to support this international work, thus enabling the IARF to make its contribution towards the pressing problems of today, concluded the report.

The President paid tribute to the activities of Dr van der Woude

and, in her absence, to Mrs van Gennep-Schreuder, for their Hungarian relief work, and to the Vice-President, Rev. Stewart Carter, who had devoted so much time and energy to the success of this congress. The Treasurer, Mr. G. P. van Dam, told the delegates that $ 12,000 had been spent for Hungarian relief and moreover large quantities of used clothing, shoes and blankets were distributed. A Volkswagen bus had been promised and will be sent shortly. Also persons known to the IARF in Poland and East Germany had received parcels of food, clothing and medicine. He stressed the necessity to find new funds for the IARF, as the costs are increasing and the activities of the Association are expanding.

The most important item on the Agenda was the election of a new president.

Unanimously Dr Ernest W. Kuebler was elected, who had done so much for the Congress as Chairman of the Programme Committee. Dr Kuebler accepted the election with a short speech, pledging his efforts on behalf of the Association in the coming three years. It is appropriate here also to mention the feeling of deep gratitude felt by everybody towards the retiring president, the Rt. Hon. J. Chuter Ede who in a very personal and effective way had served the Association so well.

The Treasurer, Mr G. P. van Dam, will also leave, after 25 years of service, as soon as a successor can be found. As a token of warm appreciation for his work he was made life-member of the Association.

Five new member groups were admitted:
The Freie Religionsgemeinschaft Rheinland (Germany),
the Freie Religiöse Gemeinde Offenbach (Germany),
the old-Catholic Congregation of Krakow (Poland),
the Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of Surinam and
the Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Philadelphia.

The Swiss Verein für freies Christentum hopes to invite the IARF members to a congress in 1961 in their country, an invitation, which would be gladly accepted.

An important motion is carried, instructing the Executive Committee of the IARF to take any steps it should deem desirable to follow up the excellent work begun at this congress.

Two addresses on Buddhism and Judaism

Two main addresses were given to the delegates on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. The Hon. Justice U Chan Htoon of Birma rightly observed that "The exchange of ideas, beliefs and aspirations undertaken without any proselytising design, but purely

for the advancement of knowledge and spiritual welfare, cannot fail to be of benefit to all who take part in it". After having given an insight into the structure of the Buddhist faith, he concluded: "When we look back on history, we cannot say that religion — any religion — has ever for a long period succeeded in preventing a war; but the fault lies in human nature rather than in religion..." The remedy for this can only lie in a form of religion which carries the fullest conviction; one that is impregnable against the cold blast of scientific knowledge and is philosophically comprehensive enough to include all the elements of human experience. It is only a religion of this kind which can so dominate the minds of men as to make them follow the path of virtue fearlesly, knowing that in the end right will triumph and that there is a spiritual goal that makes their suffering in this world bearable." Rabbi Solomon Freehof told the conference that there is a difference between the liberalism of the Christian and of the Jew. Christianity tends to be doctrinal so the liberal Christian will be generally an anti-credalist, but Judaism tends to be legalistic, so the liberal Jew will usually be anti-legalist, against the rabbinical lawyers and for the Biblical prophets. "We in America have not yet achieved (he said) the new philosophy needed for calm and careful living from day to day. If that is what is needed, Judaism has it, for Judaism has developed an interesting relationship to the minutiae of daily living. It is rather a strange religion; a religion of minor minutiae; a religion of minor sacraments; a religion which believes that the nobility of life is built up like a coral reef".

The end....

Another important session had still to come: the second plenary session in which the findings of the groups had to be discussed. After a night of hard work by the findings committee, and a struggle with a badly functioning stencil machine, under the able leadership of the new President, Dr. Ernest W. Kuebler, delegates heard the findings, discussed them, suggested changes, approved the texts. The reader will find part of these findings in this Digest, they will be published shortly in full and distributed to the member groups. They do not represent the opinion of all those present, but they indicate the line of thought and the direction of purpose of the congress. May they be studied carefully in all liberal churches, thus bringing the results of this congress to as many hearts and minds as possible.

The end came on Wednesday evening with a candle-light service in the First Unitarian Church. Representatives of the five World Religions read verses out of their holy books and hymns from these different traditions were sung. Then the church became dark,

only one big candle was left burning, symbolising the light of God. The representatives of the religions came to that light and lighted their candles from it and gave it to the choir and the choir gave it to the crowded congregation in the church. In a long procession with burning candles all went out of the church into the darkness of the night.

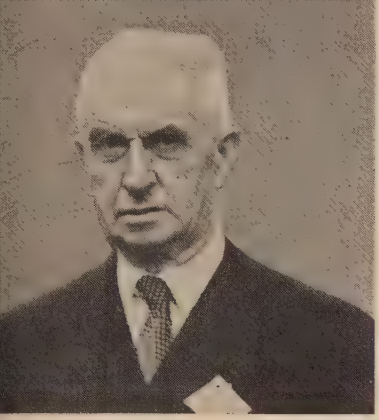
That service symbolised the deep aspiration of this congress, that the world religions may enlighten the world, the deep yearning of millions for real brotherhood and fellowship between men, above race, nationality and religious tradition; at the same time we were reminded of the perplexing and fundamental diversity of the great religions, their varying perspectives. Not an easy way of harmonising the great religious truths in the main religions lay before us, but the difficult way of learning to respect and tolerate other truths then those known to us, and to act together on behalf of this world and its needs.

A beginning?....

Thus as we blew out our candles, we knew that this had been only a very small beginning of a far bigger undertaking: the communion of the great religions for the sake of the world. Reviewing the congress, we knew that we had to understand much more of each other and that our common responsibilities had not been sufficiently defined, because we had not made clear enough the needs of this world. But we had been together, representatives of various faiths had been in our midst, we had heard them and appreciated them, and they had been glad to be with us. We had met and we were strenghtened in our fellowship; this could be the beginning of other fruitful meetings.

All those who were not from America took away with them the memory of an especially fine encounter, an encounter with the hospitality and generosity of American liberals, which was so indispensable for the right atmosphere.

On Thursday night, August 14th there was a Farewell Dinner in the luxurious Shoreland Hotel Ballroom, with again many speeches full of thankfulness, especially to those, who had been hosts and hostesses during the Congress. But the main feature of that Farewell Dinner was that we didn't say farewell, but promised to see each other in three years' time.



THE GOING and the COMING MAN

At the Chicago Congress, the Rt Hon. J. Chuter Ede retired from the Presidency of the Association having completed the three year period of service and was succeeded by the Rev. Dr. Ernest W. Kuebler. We wish to take the opportunity of expressing our thanks to the retiring President and to welcome the new.

Mr Chuter Ede brought to the office of President a prestige it has never enjoyed before. As a member of the Privy Council, a member of the British Parliament and above all as Home Secretary in the Cabinet, his name was known the world over. His sympathetic understanding of world problems, his wide experience and knowledge of them, gave us a leader of tremendous power and significance. For three years his gifts of leadership were at our disposal. On our behalf he travelled far and long and in his speeches, with his ready wit, his clear and logical exposition of a problem, he won friends, not only for himself, but for our Association. We shall always be grateful to have had a man of such eminence ready and willing to spend and be spent in our service. The Association has been strengthened and enriched by an inspiring and imaginative leadership at once real and measureless in its contribution to the future success of our work.

Dr. Kuebler succeeds to a task from which he will not shrink, and though naturally his method of approach may well be different, and the gifts he brings to the office other than those of Mr Ede's, we have every confidence that he will add to the work done by Mr Ede and make the name and the work of the I.A.R.F. not only more widely known among the liberal religious groups of the world, but make that work more worthy still.

H. S. C.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE I.A.R.F.

To our friends around the world who are committed to bring freedom and liberty into the temples, halls and churches of the world's religions. . . . greetings!

Upwards to one thousand of us in Chicago Illinois, U.S.A. felt a new spirit of dedication to our movement and we returned to our homelands with a conviction that "Today's Religions Can Meet the World's Needs Today." Our first commitment is to bear unfailing witness to the liberal faith that is in us. Amid our wide diversity of practices and opinions, it follows that we, the liberals, will seek our "greatest common denominator" which will give fresh energy to every high and noble religious conviction and purpose. Thus united we press forward in every effort to create for all men a more truly spiritual life.

Should one be able to report accurately the Chicago Congress it would include informative principal addresses from representatives of five great religions; discussions of the practical aspects of the world's needs and religion's resources to deal with them; devotional services of high inspiration; personel friendships made which renewed our faith in men and women as forces for good and righteousness; and last but not least, an abundance of genuine hospitality and goodwill of the Americans and Canadians who were the hosts to this gathering.

We are convinced that ahead of us are many problems of a theoretical and practical nature, but none of them can be solved without calling upon religion for the assurance that men of faith live by and rely upon ultimate values. May we of the I.A.R.F. show to the world evidence of men who grasp the opportunity of this moment in order to widen the skirts of light and make narrower the margin of darkness in the world.

ERNEST W. KUEBLER, President

WISDOM FROM THE DISCUSSIONS:

He who thinketh by the inch
and who speaketh by the yard
shall be kicked by the foot.

DECLARATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS
OF THE PANEL GROUPS

The six panel groups, which met daily, reported their findings and resolutions at a plenary session of the Congress, Wednesday afternoon, August 13.

The panels were made up of groups concerned with six specific areas of religious concerns: 1. Philosophy and Theology; 2. Growing Tensions, Social, Racial and Religious; 3. Science in the Modern World; 4. Worship, Education and the Arts; 5. Ethics and International Relations; 6. Human Values and Economic Forces

Preliminary to the declarations and resolutions, the panel reporters presented a statement on the Congress theme, *Today's Religions Can Meet the World's Needs Today,"* summarized herewith.

Today's Religions Can Meet the World's Needs Today

This is the theme of the Sixteenth Congress of the International Association for Liberal Christianity and Religious Freedom (I.A.R.F.). In adopting this theme the Congress makes a bold claim. It is by no means a claim of present accomplishment. Rather, it is a claim upon the future. It is the expression of a faith. It is the expression of a confidence in the resources that are available to men of contrite heart, to men who in the spirit of Jesus and of the great prophets of all religions are willing to take risks for the sake of their faith.

We would be people of contrite heart, for we recognize that, in the face of the needs of men, religion today — including our own — has served to divide men as much as to unite them in human community. Similar divisions also appear between men who hold to a religious faith and men who believe that they must reject any religious faith. This divisiveness is due to our arrogance, including the arrogance of apathy.

It is easier to split the atom than to change or break old habits of thought and action, or to escape the bonds of our inherited culture or of our neighbors' opinions. New ways of understanding and cooperation cannot be found unless a new attitude of openness is adopted — an attitude ready to receive new insights and experiences, and to respond to them. We cannot find new ways unless we are willing to surrender our arrogance for the sake of newness of life. Only this attitude of openness can render us self-critical and disclose new possibilities of meeting responsibility.

In adopting the attitude of openness we recognize that none of our religious symbols adequately represents the resources of human fulfillment. All of our symbols are human creations; they come and go with time; they cannot be exempt from criticism; they

must be understood anew; and sometimes they must be replaced. Yet something more than openness is needed. Something more than the desire to overcome provincialism is required.

Men of the liberal faith are open not only to each other and to other religions. They are also open to what we call God — or the infinite, or the eternal, or the spirit — that which transcends and judges all religion and culture and which ever finds new and tangible expression in new situations. Each of these concrete expressions — material or verbal — will be lost in time, but there remains imperishable that transcendent reality which is embodied like a flame in the flow of changing things and symbols. Each of the world's religions reflects this undying flame in its own way. Each possesses its characteristic perspectives which have taken shape through historical development and experience. Indeed, within each of the religions a certain variety of perspective obtains. We neither wish nor expect the varying perspectives to disappear. Nor do we expect them to lose their identity in synthesis or syncretism or "religion in general." The basic perspectives must be maintained in their own dynamic integrity.

The liberal religious outlook is freedom-loving, freedom-seeking, freedom-giving. This search for freedom calls for communication between the great traditions and perspectives, for the dialogue that elicits creative integrity. Through sympathetic conversation between perspectives, there emerges new mutual understanding, new discovery of the latent meanings of the perspectives, and new recognition of common responsibilities. Of such genuine dialogues we refuse to predict or to prejudge the outcome. To prejudge is to impede or pervert the conversation. Genuine conversation leads to new possibilities. Precisely this confidence in communication is the confidence that a power greater than ourselves, and greater than we know, works when we respond to its demands. It is out of this conversation with others and with the transcendent that integrity overcomes arrogance with creative love.

But the conversation between the perspectives does not take place in a vacuum. The conversation must concern itself with the vital needs of men. Otherwise, it can become a form of escapism.

Where the vital needs of men are recognized and served, there genuine religion is present, whether its language be secular or sacred.

Panel I — Philosophy and Theology

All of man's great religions have changed through the centuries as new knowledge and mutual contact required. Our goal is understanding between the historic faiths. Rightly conceived, this will reduce tensions and eliminate unessential and diverse ideas and practices. To us, understanding is only possible when we begin with sympathetic appreciation of the attempts of all men to comprehend their

cosmic and human surroundings, and when we reject all claims to possess final truth. Our work is, in fact, changed by the process of our coming to know it, and this, in turn, continuously changes us. We help this highest human growth by the critical appropriation of all the insights of the traditions and the equally critical abandonment of all that blocks human growing and knowing.

Our liberal tradition has flourished when certain tendencies have been dominant. The rejection of dogma has never been an end in itself, but has appeared when the dynamic quality of truth and experience was recognized, and when it was seen that men could only discover more truth in a climate of freedom. Free men are no longer permitted to coerce others, but know that they must persuade men by reason.

Theology is the attempt to think critically about the religious life of the community. At the same time, such reflection reconstructs the community. Although liberals do not insist upon any particular theological system, they have always been aware of the need for theological thinking. The traditional theologies, developed in static, prescientific and pre-industrial cultures, have been unable to help modern man solve modern problems. Liberal religion therefore, and liberal theology, have an increased relevance in today's world.

Resolution 1

Whereas the IARF is committed to furthering the dialogue among the religions as a means of better human understanding and development, and

Whereas we have profited from the experience of the Ecumenical Movement in providing opportunities for dialogues within vocational groups, and

Whereas this Congress has pioneered in bringing representatives of several faiths together to deal with vocational and professional problems,

Be it resolved that member groups use all means available to continue these interreligious dialogues on local levels. Adopted

Resolution 2

Whereas theology has been and is the intellectual expression of organized religion, and

Whereas the liberal churches must re-examine and restate their faith in contemporary terms, and

Whereas the liberal churches, if they are to be true to their genius and traditional concerns, must once again participate in the theological conversations within and beyond Christianity,

Be it resolved that we call upon our member groups, and, especially, the clergy and lay leaders of member groups, to

1. recognize the need in these days of theological relevance,

2. inform themselves of contemporary theological concerns and issues,
3. deal seriously with the questions currently being raised in theological and philosophical circles. Adopted

Panel 2 — The Growth of Tensions — Racial, Cultural, Religious

Millions of people the world over have become unwilling to submit to fate. They realize that they need not inevitably suffer poverty, nor accept indefinitely outrages to their dignity as human beings. Their refusal to accept many long-standing denials of their basic needs is, however, meeting with the continued and sometimes the increased resistance of defenders of the old arrangements. This conflict causes mounting tensions; and they will continue to mount until the denials of men's basic needs are reduced or ended. Traditional religions that taught submission to an unalterable fate are losing their power, or are becoming transformed into movements for change. In contrast to religions of resignation and submission, liberal religion kindles man's "divine discontent." It encourages men's hope for a world of open opportunity — a world that will meet man's basic needs, tangible and intangible. To meet his tangible needs for food, shelter, medicine, man must learn an ethics of competence, of measurable achievements and success — with its accompanying fears of incompetence, poverty and failure. But man's intangible needs for love, attention, communication, for respect and self-respect — these needs cannot be met unless he learns also another kind of ethics which must extend to persons of all conditions, colors, and levels of attainment.

Here liberal religion has a double task. It must aid the victims of oppression, to the extent of its abilities; and it must not forget the spiritual needs even of the oppressors. It must strive to end the practice of discrimination and it must help all concerned to recover a sounder basis for the meaning and worth of their actions. None of us can stand aside from the struggle to provide equal opportunity and to prevent denial of human needs. We are called to it by our enlightened self-interest; we must combat the causes of tensions that injure our communities, and we stand to gain from the promise of new creativity released among those liberated from oppression.

International Tensions and Peaceful Change.

Experience in interpersonal and intergroup relations is relevant to conflicts between nations and between regional groups of nations embracing rival ideologies. Acknowledging that the people of the world are too widely seperated by circumstance to accept at this time the close community of a common government, we suggest these as our common ground in the quest for peace.

1. Dedicated to the living values of our traditions, we should meet those who differ from us with confidence, but without hostility or contempt. Not only by our actions, but even by our thoughts, we must treat them with respect, indeed, with love, never as fools or as enemies. We must give first rank to our common goals. Only if we thus transcend the moods of fear and disdain, have we a chance to transcend the political sterility of the cold war and its threat of mutual nuclear extinction.
2. Many of those of us who accept a prudential morality of weighing the evil of war against the evil of conceding what might have to be conceded to avoid war, feel that sometimes war may be the lesser of these evils. But as the nature of the alternatives changes, this balance of evil must ever again be reassessed. We cannot exclude the possibility that war may become the greatest evil and that the pacifist position may become the realist position.
3. Change in all group relations may occur under the pressure of necessity and power, but without destructive violence.

The best present hope for national security and peaceful change is through perseverant negotiation and through a stronger UN, in which the aims of rival nations and blocs may find creative accommodations for their clashes of interest.

Panel 3 — Science In The Modern World

Science and religion should contribute continuously to each others' development. Of science we may say:
1. It fosters an attitude of flexibility and tentativeness that preserves the continuity of the scientific process and prevents its being frozen in any one of the scientific theories in which it may be embodied for the time.
2. It aims at the achievement of knowledge that can be verified and shared.
3. It is cumulative and self-corrective.
4. It increases human powers for insight and action. The scientific attitude of mind demands the cultivation of insight, awakes a sense of awe, and gives to life an indispensable dimension of adventure and zest.

Of religion we may say this in relation to science:
1. It brings to life a deep awareness of significance and purpose. The commitment to truth as a value, including scientific truth, is in its nature religious.
2. It encourages man to seek transforming and creative experiences.
3. It offers man a path to fellowship.
4. It arouses man's concern for important issues and inspires him toward individual, social and universal fulfillment.
5. Finally, religion generates in man a sense of obligation and commitment to values greater than himself, and inspires him to utilize the sciences for the fulfillment of life.

Religion and science share a world in common. The spirit of free inquiry and constructive skepticism, contributes to scientific progress and is essential to an evolving civilization. This dynamic spirit is applicable to all fields of human thought and action, including the social sciences, humanities and religion.

Panel 4 — Worship, Education and the Arts

Resolution 1

WHEREAS Historically, liberal churchmen have emphasized an intellectual approach to religion and tended to neglect the use of the arts:

AND WHEREAS the arts embody unique powers of expressing the religious awareness of men:

AND WHEREAS in some congregations in various parts of the world fresh and challenging experimentation has been undertaken:

BE IT RESOLVED that we commend our member societies more serious consideration of the full and creative use of all the arts in worship and in church life:

AND FURTHER, that the IARF establish a Commission on Art and Religion, to stimulate research and exchange of information, and publication of findings. Adopted

Panel 5 — Ethics in International Relations

In the area of international relations tensions between moral aspiration and political necessity are profound. Today, as in the past, the realities of aggressiveness and misused power stand against man's ancient vision of peace with justice among nations. The ideal is thus conditioned by the real and what should be may be frustrated by what can be at any given time in history. In this situation no general prescriptions for the triumph of virtue solve the problems of our age.

But despite these difficulties, the relevance of morality for international relations is more real today than ever before. The thermonuclear revolution has made possible the destruction of the human race itself. National power, unrestrained by morality, has brought the world to the brink of catastrophe. To rescue it ethical sanity must be reasserted and made to prevail among the nations. Here religious groups, as the major bearers of the ethical traditions of the world, have a historic responsibility.

The following are some immediate steps that should be taken to direct a stronger measure of moral realism into international life:

1. The present situation in Lebanon and Jordan indicates that a permament U.N. observation and policing arm would often be useful and more satisfactory than the forces of any one nation or of any combination of nations in effectuating mediatory and restraining functions between nations and between factions within

nations which resort to arms. We therefore urge the U.N. to set up a standing police force, similar to that now temporarily serving in the Suez region.

We are convinced that the U.N. should be constantly strengthened. A useful study of this problem may be found in the recently published program which Grenville Clark and Louis B. Sohn have presented in their wellconsidered book, "World Peace Through World Law."

2. We urge that efforts, preferably through the U.N., be intensified to achieve in Central Europe a graduated, qualitative and quantitative withdrawal of military power.

3. Given the growing lethal power of modern nuclear and conventional weapons, a world arms control agency under the U.N. should be established to control and enforce the progressive and universal reduction of both nuclear and conventional arms.

4. The increasingly complex problems that confront democratic countries call for a well-informed population. Secrecy and dishonesty by those in public office in dealing with the information in their hands generally endangers the people's freedom to make ethical, sound, and confident decisions on many issues of vast significance to them and to their children.

Panel 6 — Human Values and Economic Forces

True religious power is working where the community of freedom, integrity and love is being formed. Thus, as religious persons, we must judge economic forces in terms of their effect on the human person. Whether the theme of this Congress — "Today's Religions Can Meet the World's Needs Today" — is justified depends in large measure on what we as individuals do to resolve the conflicts between human values and economic forces caused by the political pressures resulting from the struggle for power and votes.

There are no more crucial relations among the world's peoples than those involving economic needs as aspirations, and there is no more crucial role for mankind's religions than that of mastering and guiding economic forces so that they will not overwhelm and degrade human rights and freedoms.

Because of understandable differences of outlook among the world's peoples, it is not only desirable, but necessary, that economic aid be planned, pooled and administered, as largely as possible, through the United Nations and its several specialized agencies, where countries are represented on an equal basis, and where suspicion of motives may be minimized.

There are, and we welcome the likelihood that there always will be, great diversities among the cultures, civilizations and religions of earth, but there are few, if any, basic differences among the human beings who compose them.

A voice from Europe

A short half page is not much to give an impression of all the riches with which the days of the Chicago Congress were filled. The university where our meetings were held cannot boast a long history, but it has a very definite atmosphere all its own and a distinguished background. But let me limit myself to these things which, as a German and a theologian, impressed me most. There was first a feeling of shame, of poorness. Not that we Germans were such a very small group, as compared with the Swiss or the Dutch who came from much smaller countries. What made me envy them was the quality of their delegation. What remarkable representatives — theologians as well as laymen — of a free Christianity are at work here! Or is it possible that they have not yet discovered that the time of Liberalism is past? Are these people, especially the American Unitarians and Universalists, who were mainly responsible for organising and preparing this congress, still living in a harmless rationalism, optimism and activism? Many things which we saw and heard gave this impression. Sometimes one really had the feeling of being carried back into such a lost world. Such, for instance, seemed the Christian art which we saw in churches and community centres. But at other moments these thoughts were replaced by other thoughts, and we asked ourselves whether we had not perhaps also lost something which had been entrusted to us as a costly heritage, which we should not have simplified during our struggles, but which we ought to have preserved and intensified? It has become very clear to me that the disparaging judgment about American Unitarianism which is usual among German theologians must be considered questionable and that we have every reason to learn afresh from those who kept and cherished what they themselves learned in a good school, what originally had been bestowed upon us. But our feeling of shame was deepened, or rather changed into one of grateful happiness, by the utter kindness with which we as Germans were received by our American friends. They seemed to expect something from us. Not that we should simply be americanized in our theology, our politics or our way of life, but that we as compatriots of Luther, Goethe, Kant and Schleiermacher should provide room for a Christianity which knows not only for what reasons, but also for what purposes it is free, critical and faithful of the whole world and yet superior to the world in the essence of the one Being. I wish that from those summer days in Chicago a breath of life-giving warmth would also reach our German churches and parishes, our German Universities and rectories.

Rev. RUDOLF DAUR, Stuttgart, Germany

A voice of Youth

I had long looked forward to attending the triennial Congress of the I.A.R.F. in Chicago this summer. As soon as I heard of the scope of the program, its theme and its organization, I knew that this Congress could be the most important event for contemporary world liberalism to date.

As a member of the International Religious Fellowship, I found the Congress theme, "Today's Reiligion's Can Meet the World's Needs Today" particularly vital and important. IRFers have often felt the need to go beyond the bonds of traditional Christianity in their own program. The combination of a Congress theme which would discuss the world religions with such a large number of liberal religious leaders present convinced me that this Congress would have to provide its participants with some real "food for thought." I only wish that there could have been time to discuss more fully the very broad aspects of the theme.

I gained the most, perhaps, from the panel-discussion groups to which I as an individual, was able to contribute freely. One regret of the IRF group which I represented, was that not enough of the proceedings were translated into either French or German. Without this facility of translation at hand, many of the Congress participants were unable to express themselves adequately and therefore unable to give a world-wide contribution to a Congress with a world-wide theme. We felt the Congress was lacking in this one respect.

The closing worship service needed no translation, however, for the spirit of oneness expressed through the theme of light in Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism, and Christianity and as expressed so beautifully in the candlelight procession which followed the service, made me feel that some unity had truly emerged from the diversity of men and women present during the week. IRF carried this spirit into its own youth conference which followed during the next four days and all of us present at the Madison conference were particularly conscious, during that conference, of all that we had gained during the Congress.

SPENCER LAVAN, New York

A voice from Japan

First I wish to express my sincere appreciation of the efforts of the respective committees of the Sixteenth International Congress, Chicago, in making it such a success. It seems to me that we were able, on the whole, to make considerable progress in furthering friendship and understanding among the liberal-minded religious people who stand together on the common foundation of humanism and religion.

Next I should like to say that this world-wide free religious movement must be spread to all healthy and reasonable religions as

well as to other Protestants and Catholics and also to such groups as the MRA, Lions and Rotary Clubs, and UNESCO.

I wonder if the present collaboration among us is not be too limited and narrow, so much so that we fail to extend our hands to our other brothers and sisters. We, the spiritual and religious, should compose and perform a beautiful symphony in which different kinds of instruments are used to produce harmony. We should overcome our difficulties, present or future.

Lastly, due to the profound significance of the above-mentioned aim, our international convention should be held annually in liberal nations, inviting representatives of all healthy, religious and spiritual groups, in order to achieve our eternal ideal.

Because of my faith in free Christianity and because of my position as a professor at a Catholic university, I should like to form a bridge between Protestants, including liberal Christians, and Catholics.

Dr. KAIZE NOMA,
Professsor of Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan

The voice of a lady

As an IARF "old-timer", having begun with the Copenhagen conference of 1934, and attended each congress since, I can confidently and from experience recommend these congresses as a way of making friends in many lands. Reaction to the Chicago Congress of 1958 links itself to memories of other conferences, each of which has had its outstanding characteristics. Inspiring lectures, keen and interested discussions of mutual problems, uplifting services, friendly gatherings over meals, meetings with old friends, making new ones, these we have had before, and hope to have again.

At Chicago one of the most impressive memories is of the contacts, not merely with our fellow-liberal Christians, but with speakers of the other great world religions. We felt here the common bond of men striving in their own ways for the betterment of mankind, spiritual levels all over the world rising as the flood waters of common inspiration meet and join. Thus we were given a feeling of belonging to an ever-widening circle wherein all men of goodwill could work together for the good of all.

Three things those of us from overseas will well remember from Chicago are: first the friendliness. One of the English delegates at the women's meeting said she had found a new recipe for making friends: "you just stand still for a moment and someone comes up and speaks to you". It was certainly a thrilling experience to see from the labels all wore that we were meeting liberal thinkers from all over the North American Continent, as well as from Europe and Asia.

Another memory of course is the heat — Belfast in 1955 was

extraordinary warm for Nothern Ireland, but Chicago was determined to give us an even warmer welcome. It was some consolation for us from cooler climates to find many Americans finding it hot too! We all survived, and enthusiasm kept us awake and interested.

Hospitality in U.S.A. is proverbial and the ladies of the Chicago churches certainly met the world's needs with the never failing fount in the Ida Noyes Lobby and Fenn House. So often too at congresses one stays in a hostel or hotel and never sees the homes of the country; the visits to Chicago homes on Sunday afternoon will always remain a pleasant memory of the Congress.

Other memories that will linger long are the morning prayers, the music, the vaulted arches of the Rockefeller Chapel, recalling the great church of St. Pierre at Geneva, and the impressive candlelight service — with the flames of candles afterwards burning steadily in the soil of the gardenbed, a symbol of our intention to keep our feet firmly planted on the soil, while we strove to keep alight a flame of freedom in a dark world.

M. K. GARRY

A voice from India

The Unitarian Association and Universalist Church of the United States are to be congratulated on the excellent arrangements made for the accommodation of the delegates and visitors who came from different countries to attend the Congress at Chicago. The food-and-board arrangement was very good, and the charge was moderate. American hospitality is well known, and this has certainly been proved by our American hosts.

It was very interesting to note that liberals of about 17 countries had an occasion to meet together at this Congress and to exchange their views. Such a gathering always helps in promoting brotherly feelings among the people of different nationalities, climates and languages. I believe that we all enjoyed the company of one another, and could realise during those days that we are the children of one brotherhood. This, I realised, is the highest reward of such a gathering.

As regards the speeches and the deliberations, it was occasionally felt that the programme was rather heavy, and all of it could not be properly attended. This was inevitable, as was also noticed elsewhere, on similar occasions, because the programme could not be prolonged further, but had to be kept within the planned timeable. The learned addresses delivered by the five Presidents, one on each day, from the 9th to the 13th August, were no doubt pregnant with philosophical thoughts as well as historical viewpoints. But it is difficult to say how far they could help to show how the religion that each President advocated could meet the present-day

needs of the world. The theme of the congress was that the religions of the world could meet the needs of the world, and it was expected that this point would be made clearer. If each President would expound his religious viewpoint, bearing in mind the theme of the Congress, he would find that what he calls his religion is really only an *aspect* of the Religion for Humanity, and that really there is only *one Religion* for all, i.e. Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man.

I hope and pray that our course will be towards that goal, and that the Congress will also lead us towards it.

God's mercy alone prevails.

J. N. DAS, Secretary, Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, Calcutta

I.R.F. CONFERENCE, MADISON, USA, 1958

The main conference of the International Religious Fellowship this summer in Madison, Wisc., USA, dealt with the subject "Social Welfare—Who Cares?". It was attended by 74 participants. As an introduction and as a conclusion to this conference, there was a magnificent travelling-programme, offered by the Americans to the 27 European members from England, Germany, Holland and Switzerland. The American IRF Committee, under the inspiring guidance of Spencer Lavan, organized a 5-week journey of small groups in motor cars to all parts of the United States, during which we were received everywhere most hospitably by members of the Unitarian and Universalist Churches and by local LRY-groups (LRY = Liberal Religious Youth). Besides a very elaborate programme of sightseeing (every local group acted more or less as if the trip started in their own place!), we had a continuous opportunity for informal conversation and personal discussion with all kinds of people: altogether an instructive and unforgettable experience, for which the American organizers and hosts deserve the greatest respect and thankfulness.

One week before the Madison conference, we came from different directions back to Chicago to meet each other at the IARF Congress, about which you will read elsewhere. As a general and rough impression of a younger participant, I can say that we appreciated this experiment of a real confrontation with representatives of the world religions very much. It reminded us of the truth that religious provincialism is unjustified and dangerous, but on the other hand that one cannot say much of importance to solve the world's problems without an elaborate exploration of one's own religious tradition. Technically I found it sometimes

a little bit too much of a mass-meeting and too complex in the way problems were raised (the theme of each of the six discussion groups would justify a conference on its own), to leave a clear picture of the congress as a whole. But many specific moments — a lecture, a service of worship, a stimulating conversation — will never be forgotten.

After the proper IRF Conference, we visited the interesting technical and social projects in the Tennessee Valley; and the National Convention of the Liberal Religious Youth (the American member-organization of the IRF) where the topic "Education for responsibility" resulted in many penetrating discussions.

But all this was only an addition to the real interest of IRF: its conference on Social Welfare, led by our efficient and bilingual president, Axel Hofer. Because of various practical reasons, the programme was compressed into a period of three and a half days, leaving only the late nights for recreation. In order to prevent confusion and platitudes, and to promote a concentrated discussion of some definite problems, the organizing committtee had attempted the experiment of inviting only one lecturer for the conference. The Rev. Donald Harrington of the Community Church of New York did an excellent job by giving a series of three lectures consistent with the liberal outlook that provoked a constructive discussion. Rev. Harrington started with a rough definition of social welfare as "the availability to all men of a sufficiency of the necessities of life". He gave a general survey of the history of Western society: from feudalism (with its strongly hierarchial structure and nothing but private and occasional welfare), via capitalism (with theoretical equality for everybody, but actual injustice to the economically weak), to "socialism" (in the broadest sense of mass-planning and combination instead of competition). The various national societies in the West are, with all kinds of variations, on their way from the second to the third phase. Every social system has always to deal with two central problems: that of human nature, and that of the social conditions of the time. As far as human nature is concerned, a society has not only to appeal to man's better aspirations, but also to protect man against his irrational and selfish inclinations. As regards the social conditions of the time, the modern technical development to mass-production and mass-communication cannot be stopped, and this makes planning unavoidable. On the other hand this development creates some new and fundamental problems, which should be taken seriously. Among others there were mentioned: 1) the problem of power. Can democracy be maintained with an accumulation of power? New checks and balances have to be made, not only in the political, but also in the economic sphere. — 2) Depersonalization.

How can the increase of institutional managing integrate personal relations and individual participation? Living in small communities should be promoted, churches and private social organizations have to accept their new tasks. — 3) Incentives and the ultimate meaning of welfare. When people must no longer work for their survival, what then is the meaning of their work and life? A new morality of service is needed.

During the long discussions in which Dr. H. Faber, one of the Secretaries of the IARF, also took part, it was generally accepted that none of the dangers mentioned could be used as an argument to stop social welfare. The real problem does not lie in historical development as such, but in man's difficulties to integrate the new situation. The resentment of a poet who complained about "progress, that comfortable disease" was felt to be an escape. Nevertheless, we all realized, that the present development would lead to a catastrophe, if man could not adopt a new willingness to serve.

I think that this last item needs still more fundamental reflection. If it is true that "service" is not only one moral value among many others, but also the basic ethical concept and the only way in which human life is possible today, this statement has a lot of philosophical, theological, psychological, political and other implications. If the talents and possessions of an individual and of a group are no aim in itself, but only gifts and means to serve each other, nobody excluded, then we need an entire revision of our personal and collective way of life. Then the idea of competition should be banished everywhere: in our pursuit of happiness for ourselves and for our group, in our striving for popularity and acknowledgement, in our searching for political and economic security. Perhaps it will become evident for the first time in history, that the way of the cross is the only way to survive as a human being.

At this conference the new IRF Executive Committee was unanimously elected:

President: Donald Dunkley, England
1st Vice-President: Bram Rutgers v. d. Loeff, Holland
2nd Vice-President: Dorle Gehrmann, Germany
Secretary: Mieke Spelberg, Holland, 's-Gravelandseweg 65, Hilversum
Treasurer: Bernard Aerni, Switzerland
Editor of "Forward Together": Bobby Martin, USA

In special commissions the IRF also paid attention to a re-appraisal of its aims and purposes. The differences in emphasis among the various member groups were discussed in a spirit of mutual understanding. On one side one stressed that freedom and tolerance should never be a way to escape decisions and responsibilities.

On the other hand there was the warning that no liberal should shut himself up in a straitjacket of tradition. Not without connection with these discussions, the theme for the next IRF Conference in England was formulated: "Religious freedom — religious commitment". Then questions will be posed like: What is religion? How is religious faith related to historical tradition? What is for us modern liberals the spiritual centre of our Western tradition, or what do we consider as the essence of Christianity? — And all this against the background of the main question: To what do we as liberals commit ourselves?

The will to keep together is strong and sincere, the task to fulfil . . without end.

OTTO D. DUINTJER

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF LIBERAL CHRISTIAN WOMEN

Representatives of isolated liberal thinking women's groups throughout the world were thrilled at Chicago to be greeted by two hundred friendly women at the Quadrangle Club on Monday August 11th, during the IARF Congress. The American women's groups had spent much time and trouble publicising the meeting and many women became interested in the Congress through their efforts. After friendly talk over lunch, we settled down to the Business Meeting. Unfortunately, our President, Dr Boer, was unable to come to the Congress, so the chair was taken by Mrs Casparis, of the Albert Schweitzer College, Switzerland, who was one of our speakers at the Arnhem conference last year, and for long a member of the Union.

The meeting opened with a welcome to the overseas delegates from the presidents of the two big American groups, Mrs Davies for the General Alliance, and Mrs Hamlin for the Universalist Women.

The secretary of the Union replied, thanking the American hostesses for all they had done in every way to make the meeting possible.

Gereetings were read from absent groups all over the world; also from the former secretary Rev. E. R. Lee, to whom the Union owes so much. Margaret Barr, from the Khasi Hills sent a special greeting to "her sisters who live their lives in the strength of the same dynamic faith." There was also a greeting from the wives of Unitarian ministers in Budapest. Special greetings were sent in return, and to the Miss Wilford, Treasurer 1952 — January last, who had looked forward so much to Chicago but was obliged to resign through illness, and is still in hospital.

The secretary's report showed a steady increase in membership —

the total group membership number, now the Dutch Remonstrant and Reformed Church Women's groups belong is more than 54000. The active interest, with more small groups and individuals becoming members has much increased; the member groups reported at Chicago were 23, and 65 individual members; since the meeting these numbers have grown!

FROM OUR MEMBERGROUPS

The new Essex hall

As we go to press we learn that the new Essex Hall will be opened on Saturday, October 25th by Mr Ronald P. Jones, Treasurer of the General Assembly, in the presence of a large and representative gathering including representatives of the American Unitarian Association, the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, the Free Church Federal Council, the Society of Friends, the Salvation Army and the Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral. The President of the I.A.R.F., Dr. E. W. Kuebler, will take part in the ceremony and give the greetings of the Association. Dr. H. Faber will also be present. A fuller report will appear in our next issue.

The universalist service committee writes:

Nordalb, South Germany

A Universalist workcamp team of thirteen youth was assigned in the summer of 1958 to work with child refugees and underprivileged children ages 11—18 at the Arbeiterwohlfahrt tent camp located at Deggingen Fels in the Nordalb mountain area of South Germany. The Universalist team members were each assigned as counsellors to a tent with eight children. Members led camp crafts, recreation and other activities for the children who came in two periods thus increasing the number who could be given a vacation from the depressing milieu of the refugee centers from which they had come.

Jugendwerk (Youth Home) Northwest Germany

For the tenth successive summer a Universalist team of eight students was assigned to work with youth refugees from East Berlin and other emotionally disturbed German youth at the Arbeiterwohlfahrt sponsored youth home located at Druhwald near Soltau in northwest Germany. Here the "team" sought to provide not only examples of high personal behavior in their relationships with the boys, but also to provide the wholesome friendship and understanding warmth which delinquent boys

12—19 years of age need so badly. The "team" led by Richard Gilbert, graduate student for the Universalist ministry at St. Lawrence University, provided special recreational and social programs for the boys each evening.

1959 Workcamps

The Universalist Service Committee is accepting applications for service with its 1959 workcamp teams that will be assigned to refugee camps in Austria, Switzerland and West Germany. Applicants must be 19—32 years of age and emotionally stable, flexible, adaptable and able to work well with others. A knowledge of German is most desirable and a demonstrated ability in several areas of camp and recreational craft is essential. Address: 16 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Mass. USA.

Notice

In our next Digest we hope to give more details about our new member groups.

BOOK NEWS

Dr. Fritz Buri, "Das lebendige Wort" (The living Word), Herbert Reich evang. Verlag, Hamburg-Bergsted.

Dr. Fritz Buri, the well-known minister in Basel (Switzerland) and professor at the theological faculty there, gives in this book of 178 pages meditations — as he calls them — on the first and the last books of the Bible. It contains 61 extracts of sermons which he preached in his church over a period of two years. He is publishing a work in four volumes on the central dogmatic problems of our time and he felt the need to illustrate his theological views with the pastoral word from the pulpit. — It is difficult to give a survey of the contents of this book, but the reader will easily understand that the central themes of the Bible are treated in the way Buri sees them and that the book therefore gives a good insight not only into Buri's thinking but into the religious situation on the European continent as well.

Dr. R. Boeke, "Divinatie", ed. Fedde Dijkstra, Leeuwarden (Holland).

This book (in Dutch) of 227 pages is the thesis with which Dr. Boeke received his degree at the university of Leyden. In its essence it is an endeavour to stimulate a new interest in the work of Rudolf Otto. Divination is the capacity of man to see and to acknowledge the divine in its manifestations. Rudolf Otto's famous work "Das Heilige" provided the starting point for Dr. Boeke's

study. In separate chapters he writes about the psychological viewpoints, the philosophy of religion in its relations with Otto's conceptions and about the consequences of all this for practical theology.

Dr. H. G. Hubbeling, "Natuur en Genade bij Emil Brunner", Assen, Holland.

The English translation of the title of this book should be "Nature and Grace in the work of Emil Brunner". The author is a young Dutch theologian who received his doctor's degree with this study of the work of the well-known Swiss theologian Emil Brunner. He considers himself a grateful pupil of the two great theologians: Barth and Brunner. The book gives an insight into the differences between Barth and Brunner in connection with the problem of the relation between natural religion and revelation in the field of religious beliefs. It tries to continue the discussion between the two theologians which has come to an end after a violent start. The book is a good example of the way in which some liberal theologians on the European continent are influenced by dialectic theology.

"Freies Christentum, eine Schriftenreihe", Frankfurt, Germany.

Our German member group, the "Deutscher Bund für freies Christentum", which comprises the liberal forces in the German Lutheran Churches and considers itself the trustees of the heritage of the great liberal theological tradition in Germany, publishes a series of small booklets, to which we would like to draw the attention of our readers. Especially worth-while are: "Adolf von Harnack" by the Rev. Windschild, giving a picture of the life and work of this famous theologian, and "Das freie Christentum in der evangelischen Kirche" (Liberal Christianity in the Protestant Church) by the Rev. Dr. Hans Pribnow, editor of the monthly periodical of the Deutscher Bund. This booklet gives a good insight into the ideals and the place of the liberal movement in German Protestantism.

Henry Clay Lindgren, "How to understand yourself and other people", ed. Rider & Company, London, etc.

This book of 219 pages by one of the professors of psychology at San Francisco State College is a well-written, popular book on personal problems and what psychology can do about them. It stresses the importance of selfunderstanding and speaks about the emotional backgrounds of our behavior. The problems of anxiety, communication, freedom, power, interpersonal relations, maturity, etc. are treated in a clear, well-illustrated way. This volume indeed offers — as is said on the dust-jacket — a scientific, yet easy-to-follow approach to our everyday personal problems.

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